THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

TRAVELS.

LETTERS FROM GENEVA AND FRANCE.

Written during a residence of between two and three years in different parts of those countries, and addressed to a lady in Virginia.

(Continued from page 244.)

LETTER LI.

Our driver had served for some years in a Swiss regiment in the British service: he liked us for the language we spoke, though we told him we were not Englishmen, and did all in his power to oblige and to entertain us: there was no possibility of being accommodated at any of the little towns with barbarous names we stopt at, for the same reason which had compelled us to quit Brieg, and we travelled on towards Sider, where we did not arrive till twelve at night: our driver was a strong, active, well-looking man, of about thirty-five, he wore a round hat, a blue great coat, and the most monstrous pair of shoes in point of size, which I ever beheld: he was fair, with light coloured hair and blue eyes, and might have acted one or other of the two Amphytrions to admiration, with a friend of ours, whom you have seen at K——: there is something very unaccountable in the strong likeness that is sometimes perceived betwen persons who cannot possibly be in any degree related. You remember, no doubt, the answer of a young man to Augustus Cæsar upon that subject; it is one of the best examples I know, of what the French call naiveté, and which we have no name for.

Our course was nearly West in the direction of the Rhone, and though the night came upon us, while we had still several miles to go, our conductor and his horse, who were perfectly well acquainted with the road, went as rapidly downhill, as if it had been mid day. We now and then approached the river, which seemed to

rush along with a degree of frightful velocity, and crossed the beds of several torrents. Of the country we could see nothing, but we frequently passed over places where some action had taken place during the war, and which our conductor, who had shared in all the struggles of his fellow countrymen, pointed out to us: it was here, he said, as we were finding our way through a wood, that the French surprised our main guard, but we took ample vengeance upon them the day after. That large stone covers the mouth of a cavern, where a band of robbers secreted themselves for upwards of a year. At length we crossed the Rhone, and arrived at Sider, where the house was so full, that all the accommodation we could procure was a mattress spread upon the floor of a room, where there were already three beds with each two people in it, besides a large dog, who lay at the feet of one of the persons asleep: it would require the talents of Scarron to paint some of the adventures of such a night; once I was awakened by a Watchman chanting the hour in barbarous sounds under the window, and another time by a battle between the dog and a person who came into the room, in order to find a place to lay himself down. We got to Sion early the next morning through a well-cultivated country; the valley was become broader, some attempts had been made to resist the devastations of the Rhone, and the vineyards and corn fields extended as high as cultivation could effect any thing, up the opposite mountains. The view was diversified too by several little conical hills, which rise from between forty and fifty to two hundred feet above the surface of the valley; some circumstance of situation has enabled them to resist the violence of the river, but as they consist altogether, it seems, of pebbles from all the various sorts of rocks, which are to be found in the neighbouring mountains, they originally must have been deposited here by the water at some very distant period: the Bailiff of Cevio was certainly in the right, the world is much older than people make it: Sion is a small but well-built town; it was taken by storm in 1801, and suffered all that towns generally do upon such occasions.

I remember our thinking war a very dreadful calamity in America, but there is no more comparison between our revolutionary war, and the wars of Europe, that of the Vallais, and of Switerzand in particular, than between the sports of children and the fight of devils. A humane Lady,* whom I know, came into this country after the campaign of 1801 with various articles, and with money, which she had collected in addition to what she herself liberally supplied: many villages had been burnt, and the inhabitants had disappeared; in others where the devastation had not been so general, she found some old people, some sick of both sexes, several wounded men, and numbers of children who knew nothing of their parents, and were in a state of the most deplorable want: all of them must have perished, the old, the sick, the wounded and the children, had she not brought them food, and clothes. I say nothing to you of indignities worse than death, which had been inflicted, they surpass all description: the people of the Pays de Vaud whose impatience under the government of

* Madame Cazenove.

Berne first afforded the directory an excuse for interfering in the concerns of Switzerland; who had been even fastidiously jealous of the rights of man, took an active part upon this occasion, and signalized the arms of their new republick in this diabolical warfare; but you need not be solicitous about their being punished for such conduct, and for the evils which they had drawn down upon what was once the happiest country on earth; they are moving rapidly towards that gulf, which swallows up so many neighbouring states, and will have leisure to repent hereafter. I should have derived a great deal of information at Sion, even from the sort of people I met with accidentally, had itnot been for the insurmountable difficulty of another language: at the large inn we stopt at, there was a waiter who spoke French, but on my asking for a barber and hair dresser, there came in one of the stoutest women I ever beheld, in order, as we understood, to make a tender of her services, but in sounds the most remote from Italian that I had yet heard.

We procured another car at Sion and soon arrived at the little town of St. Pierre, where, as if by magick, every body spoke French, and the mistress of the house declared to me that she had not the least idea of German. We now went for the first time, into a Vallaisan church, and it was melancholy to see the rudely carved images set off with a little frippery and tinsel, which bore the names of some of the most respectable of the celestial Hierarchy: a book has been written, I believe, to point out the resemblance of many usages of the Roman church with those of Paganism; and I can conceive how good policy required, that as many of the ancient ceremonies should be retained, as were not inconsistent with Christianity, but the transmission of honour and admiration which has taken place is, in some cases, ludicrous and absurd. Moses, as Pope observes, has usurped the ensigns of Pan, and the Virgin has succeeded to the places of Diana, of Juno Lucina, and even of Venus, all graceless as she was: it is to the Virgin that seamen offer up their prayers in a storm, it is to her that those who have been saved from shipwreck offer up their thanks, and mothers with their infant children in their arms, prostrate themselves before her altar, in silent and grateful adoration: there is no authority for this in Scripture, but it is not injurious to religion; and our Protestant divines are perhaps wrong, in wishing to submit the articles of faith and the principles of the Christian doctrine so much to the test of reason: it would be better surely to call in the charms of a chastened imagination, the sensibility of a tender heart, and the powers of eloquence to the aid of that religion, which all divine as it is, must be practised by a parcel of frail human creatures: why deprive the poor wretch who is on the brink of eternity, of the consoling idea, that the priest by his bed side, stands like a powerful interceder between God and him? and that a second Baptism conveying in its materials an emblem of incorruptibility is about to release his soul from all mortal ties? Why prevent superstition, if we are to call it by that name, from converting the agonies of death into a sweet, and gentle sleep? You will one day or other, read what Chateaubriand, who is open upon the table before me, says upon this

subject. The loss of friends in the revolution, of a mother, a sister, a father and a brother, and many years of poverty and of exile, have perhaps affected his imagination, and such a guide, in matters of religion, is not to be altogether trusted; in vindicating the claim of Christianity to every species of inferiour merit as well as to the highest, to an originality of worship and to a union with the finer arts, he deviates at times into something very like paganism, nor does it require less than all the pomp of language to preserve the dignity of his narration. I admire his attempt however, and agree with him, that something more than reason is wanting to fill up the abysses of the human heart: as I may not again have occasion to mention this authour, I will inform you now of what does him infinite honour, and puts the seal of sincerity at least upon his assertions: the political events which had deprived him of his friends, had also robbed him of his fortune, and his principal dependance was on the emoluments of an employment which he held under the consular government; this he without a moment's hesitation gave up upon a certain event which seems to have united the sympathy of all France, and to have been lamented with curses, which, as Shakspeare says, were not loud, but deep, retiring into obscurity and exposing himself to the chance of want, rather than to remain under obligations to those whose conduct he thought so highly reprehensible.

To return to the little church I was speaking of, there were several ex-votaries before the altar, one of which, was a picture representing two persons as borne across a rapid stream upon the back of the same horse: they were stretching out their arms in the act of making a vow, and a number of little angels were seen coming down to assist them, as the newly born sea-nymphs did the ship of Æneas.

I was speaking of what I had seen to the landlady of our inn, when she showed me a picture founded, as she said, upon a fact, that happened in her family. A priest in the habit of his order was seen exorcising a person out of whose mouth there proceeded a little devil about the size of a frog.

You will think it strange, that such a representation should convey conviction to the minds even of the most ignorant people in an obscure village of the Vallais; but what are we to think of Boswell, the Biographer of Samuel Johnson, who had some wit, and who was the cause of a great deal of wit in others, when he plumes himself upon having been the first to suggest, that epileptick fits were in all probability occasioned, by the residence of evil spirits in the persons affected!

For The Port Folio.

BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIRS

OF

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M. B.

Again we recur with rapture, to the interesting Biography of one of the most entertaining and purest of the British writers. We fondly dwell upon the history and the works of Goldsmith, because the first is a useful lesson, and the second the best model for graceful composition in the language. We anxiously hope that our repeated recommendation of all the pages of this ad-

mired authour, will have some influence over the younger gentlemen and students in our universities, who, whether they be solicitous to speak or to write well, will infallibly accomplish their object much sooner by reading the Vicar of Wakefield, or the Citizen of the World, than by mouthing any oration from the wonderful era of the Boston massacre in 1770, down to the last dull rumble of July thunder. Indeed, every generous youth in the country should make it a point and a principle to consult the great English authours with the most assiduous care, and turn away with loathing from juvenile trash, whether the disgraceful production of Europe or America. The very bane of style is the habit of reading the vulgar vehicles of Democratick folly, the penny pamphlets of ephemeral imbecility, the vile translations and viler imitations of French fustian, with which so many of our This, That, and 'Tother Gazettes are covered, as with so many cobwebs. Every high-spirited young man, ambitious to write correctly and elegantly, in the style of a scholar and a gentleman, should avert his eyes from false models, and gaze steadfastly upon the true. Let Sir William Temple, Dean Swift, Lord Bolingbroke, Dryden, Addison, Johnson, Burke, and Goldsmith be his constant companions. In such society he will hearken to very different language from that detestable dialect, the fashionable jargon of the mobs of America. For this sort of style, and for the infamous principles it is employed to inculcate, the writer of this article has such an habitual abhorrence, that were he a guardian or a preceptor, he would not suffer his ward or pupil to be debased by its use, or to associate with its authours. Both they and their expressions are equally contemptible. Let us think like Johnson, and write like Goldsmith.

(*Continued from page* 252.)

It is generally understood, that in the history of his Philosophick Vagabond (Vicar of Wakefield, chap. xx.) he has related many of his own adventures, and that when on his pedestrian tour through Flanders and France, as he had some knowledge of musick, he turned what had formerly been his amusement into a present means of subsistence. "I passed (says he) among the harmless peasants of Flanders, and among such of the French as were poor enough to be very merry; for I ever found them spritely in proportion to their wants. Whenever I approached a peasant's house towards nightfall, I played on the German flute one of my most merry tunes, and that procured me not only a lodging, but subsistence for the next day. I once or twice attempted to play for people of fashion; but they always thought my performance odious, and never rewarded me, even with a trifle. This was to me the more extraordinary; as whenever I used in better days to play for company, when playing was my amusement, my musick never failed to throw them into raptures, and the ladies especially; but as it was now my only means, it was received with contempt: a proof how ready the world is to underrate those talents by which a man is supported!" At the different monasteries in his tour, especially those of his own nation, his learning generally procured him temporary entertainment; and thus he made his way to Switzerland, in which country he first cultivated his poetical talents with any particular effect; for here we find he wrote about two hundred lines of his "*Traveller*."

The story which has commonly been told, of his having acted as travelling tutor to a young miser, is now thought to have been too hastily adopted from the aforesaid History of a Philosophick Vaga-

bond, and never to have been the real situation of the authour of that history. From Switzerland Goldsmith proceeded to Padua, where he stayed six months, and is by some supposed to have there taken his degree of Bachelor of Physick; though others are of opinion that if ever he really took any medical degree abroad, it was at Louvain.*

After visiting all the northern part of Italy, he travelled, still on foot, through France; and, embarking at Calais; landed at Dover in the summer of 1756, unknown, as he supposed, to a single individual, and with not a guinea in his pocket.

His first endeavours were, to procure employment as an usher in some school; but the want of a recommendation as to character and ability rendered his efforts for some time fruitless; and how he subsisted is not easy to guess. At length, however, it appears, he procured an usher's place; but in what part the school was situated, or how long he continued in it, we do not learn; though we may form some idea of the uncongeniality of the place to his mind, from the following passage in the Philosophick Vagabond: "I have been an usher at a boarding school, and may I die but I would rather be an under turnkey in Newgate. I was up early and late; I was browbeat by the master, hated for my ugly face by my mistress, worried by the boys within, and never permitted to stir out to meet civility abroad."

When in a fit of disgust he had quitted this academy, his pecuniary necessities soon became pressing; to relieve which he applied to several apothecaries and chymists for employment as a journeyman; but here his threadbare appearance, awkward manners, and the want of a recommendation operated sorely to his prejudice;* till at last a chymist near Fish-street-hill, probably moved by compassion, gave him employment in his laboratory, where he continued till he learned that his old friend Dr. Sleigh of Edinburgh, was in town: on him (who had, as we have seen, formerly relieved him from embarrassment) Goldsmith waited, was kindly received, and invited to share his purse during his continuance in London.

This timely assistance enabled our authour to commence medical practice at Bankside in Southwark, whence he afterwards removed to the neighbourhood of the Temple; his success as a physician is not known, but his income was very small; for as he used to say, he got very few fees, though he had abundance of patients. Some addition, however, he now began to derive from the efforts of his pen; and it appears, that he was for a while with the celebrated Samuel Richardson as corrector of the press.

About this time, he renewed his acquaintance with one of the young physicians whom he had

* In 1769, it is certain, he was admitted M. B. at Oxford, which university he visited in February, in company with Dr. Johnson.

* In a letter, dated Dec. 1757, he writes thus: "At London, you may easily imagine what difficulties I had to encounter; without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence: and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many in such circumstances, would have had recourse to the friar's cord, or the suicide's halter. But with all my follies I had principle to resist the one and resolution to combat the other."

known at Edinburgh. This was a son of the Rev. Dr. John Milner, a dissenting minister, who kept a classical school of eminence at Peckham in Surry. Mr. Milner observing Goldsmith's uncertain mode of living, invited him to take the charge of his father's school, the Doctor being then confined by illness: to this he consented; and Dr. Milner, in return, promised to exert his interest with the India Directors, to procure for him some medical establishment in the Company's service. This promise he faithfully performed, and Goldsmith was actually appointed physician to one of the factories in India in 1758. It appears, however, that our authour never availed himself of this post,* but continued in Dr. Milner's academy; and in this very year sold to Mr. Edward Dilly, for twenty guineas, "*The Memoirs of a Protestant condemned to the Gallies of France for his religion. Written by Himself. Translated from the Original, just published at the Hague, by James Willington*, 2 vols. 12mo.

Toward the latter end of 1758, Goldsmith happened to dine at Dr. Milner's table with Mr. Ralph Griffiths, the proprietor of The Monthly Review, who invited him to write articles of criticism for that respectable publication, on the terms of a liberal salary, besides board and lodging. By a written agreement, this engagement was to last for a year; but at the end of seven or eight months it was dissolved by mutual consent, and Goldsmith took a miserable apartment in Green-Arbour-court, Little Old Bailey.* In this wretched hovel, our authour completed his "*Inquiry into the Present State of Polite Literature in Europe*," which was published in 1759, by Dodsley, and was well received. In October of the same year, he began "*The Bee*," a weekly publication, which terminated at the eighth number. About this time also he contributed some articles to The Critical Review, one of which (we believe a review of "Ovid's Epistles, translated into English verse by a Mr. Barrett, Master of the Grammar School at Ashford in Kent") introduced him to the acquaintance of Dr. Smollet, who was then editor of The British Magazine; and for that work Goldsmith wrote most of those "*Essays*," which were afterwards collected and published in a separate volume. By Dr. Smollet, too, he was recommended to some respectable booksellers, particularly to Mr. John Newbery, who well deserved the eulogium bestowed by Warburton on the trade in general, as one of "the best judges and most liberal rewarders of literary merit." By Mr. Newbery, Goldsmith was engaged at a salary of 100*l.* a year to write for The Publick Ledger, a series of periodical papers. These he called "*Chinese Letters;*" and they were afterwards collected in two vols., under the title of "*The Citizen of The World.*" It was soon after this that he commenced his acquaintance with Dr. Johnson.

* Though it is certain, that, in contemplation of going to India, he circulated Proposals to print by subscription "*An Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe*," as a means of defraying the expenses of his fitting out for the voyage.

* An Engraving of the house, illustrated by a description, was given in The European Magazine, Vol xliii, pp. 7, 8.

The important engagement with Newbery, for a hundred pounds a year, encouraged Goldsmith to descend Break-neck-steps,* and to hire a decent apartment in Wine-Office-Court, Fleet-street. Here he dropped the humble *Mister*, and dubbed himself *Doctor* Goldsmith. Here also he put the finishing hand to his excellent novel called "*The Vicar of Wakefield;*" but was, when he had done, extremely embarrassed in his circumstances, dunned by his landlady for arrears of rent, and not daring to stir abroad for fear of arrest: in fact, she herself at length had him arrested; he then summoned resolution to send a message to Dr. Johnson, stating that he was in great distress, and begging that he would come to him as soon as possible. Johnson sent him a guinea and promised to follow almost immediately. When he arrived, he found Goldsmith in a violent passion with the woman of the house, but consoling himself as well as he could with a bottle of Madeira, which he had already purchased with part of the guinea. Johnson, corking the bottle, desired Goldsmith would be calm, and consider in what way he could extricate himself. The latter then produced his novel as ready for the press. The Doctor looked into it, saw its merit, and went away with it to Mr. Newbery, who gave him 60*l.* for it; with this sum he returned to Goldsmith, who, with many invectives, paid his landlady her rent. Newbery, however, seems not to have been very sanguine in his hopes of this novel, for he kept the MS. by him near three years unprinted; his ready purchase of it, probably was in the way of a benefaction to its distressed authour, rather than under any idea of profit by the publication.

(*To be continued.*)

* A steep flight of stairs (commonly so termed) leading from the door of his lodging-house in Green-Arbour-court to Fleet-market.

POLITE LITERATURE.

For The Port Folio.

In our last, having described rather copiously many objects, worthy of the attentive gaze of a critical observer, we shall now succinctly state what a long habit of reflection on the subject has convinced us is the most feasible as well as the most plausible plan of a Quarterly Publication of annals of American Literature.

It should assert and defend *ab ovo usque ad mala* principles of the most lofty, intrepid, independent, high-toned, and decided character. It should never, on any occasion, or for any purpose, make the smallest sacrifice to the prejudices of the populace. Its conductors should habitually disdain, for the sake of a little miserable perishable popularity, to suppress the truth, or support a faction. So far from courting the mob, our Editors should treat the herd of swine and their feeders with the most ineffable contempt, and be satisfied with the general applause of scholars and gentlemen, men of honour and cavaliers. There is not an individual, whose suffrage is worth having, but what would either openly or covertly give a cheerful support to such a work.

Such a Review should likewise be conducted by men, who are avowed *Partizans* and Martinets in Religion, Politicks, and Literature, men who would uniformly act in a spirit of Scottish *Clanship*, always prepared at every hazard to defend themselves, and assail the foe.

Such a Journal should make no pretensions to a character of impartiality. This sort of character quick-

ly degenerates into a character of insipidity. Our review, on the contrary should be exceedingly partial to genius, to learning, to taste and virtue. It should be vehemently partial to those systems of polity, those modes of faith, and those schools of literature in preference of which History and Experience have granted a charter with the broadest seal of approbation.

To the splendid reputation and extensive sale and currency of such a work, powers similar to those which have adorned The Anti-Jacobin newspaper, and which continue to emblazon the Edinburgh Review should be enlisted. Mere heavy and prosing criticism would never be read. At the projected board of reviewers, no dishes but poignant dishes must appear. There must be attick salt and the caustick Cayenne of lampoons. The company would soon become thin and spiritless unless enlivened by merriment, wit and satire. Epigrammatick sentences and brilliant sarcasms should relieve the seriousness of literary discussion.

After having in each department of The Review promulgated the laws of legitimate composition, and exhibited the standard of correct principles, that luckless wight, who should in any publication deviate either from the one or the other should be treated like an audacious offender. The whole force of the confederacy should be exerted to render the hardened sinner contemptible. In the spirit of Romish anathema, his foolish or his flagitious page should be condemned by bell, book, and candle, and he should be interdicted from any approach to the empire of Learning or the purlieus of Wit.* This highly *uncandid* mode of treating the adversary as the *drivellers* of humanity are apt to term it, would contribute more to the cause of good sense and genuine literature than millions of the critical canons of Aristotle, or the wise saws of Alderman Prudence.

Lastly, though the writers may often unbend and indulge themselves in a mood of spriteliness, laughter and gayety, yet the motto of each should be part of the advice of Polonius to Hamlet: Be you familiar, *but by no means vulgar*. Let them proudly disdain ever to appear in that contemp-

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* In Goldsmith's Citizen of the World, there is a very pleasant description of an interview between the Chinese philosopher and a bookseller. The mode of criticism indicated by the latter appears to be pretty exactly followed by the Edinburg reviewers, and might be very usefully adopted here.

Are there not some works, said I, that from the very manner of their composition must be exempt from criticism, particularly such as profess to disregard its laws. There is no work whatever but my critick can criticise, replied the bookseller, even though you wrote *in Chinese*, he would have a pluck at you. Suppose you should take it in your head to publish a book, let it be a volume of Chinese letters, for instance; write how you will, he shall show the world you could have written better. Should you with the most local exactness, stick to the manners and customs of the country, whence you came; should you confine yourself to the narrow limits of Eastern knowledge and be perfectly simple and perfectly natural, he has then the strongest reason to exclaim. He may with a *sneer*, send you back to China for readers. He may observe that after the first or second letter the iteration of the same simplicity is insupportably tedious; but the worst of all is, the publick, in such a case, will anticipate his censures and leave you, with all your uninstructive simplicity, to be *mauled at discretion*. Yes, cried I, but in order to avoid his indignation, and, what I should fear more, that of the publick, I would in such a case, write with all the knowledge I was master of. As I am not possessed of much learning, at least I would not suppress what little I had; nor would I appear more stupid than Nature made me. Here then, cries the bookseller, we should have you entirely in our power; unnatural, uneastern; quite out of character; *erroneously sensible* would be the whole cry. Sir, we should then *hunt you down like a rat*. Head of my father! Said I, sure there are but two ways; the door must either be shut or it must be open. I must either be natural or unnatural.—Be what you will, *we shall criticise you*, and *prove you a dunce*, in *spite of your teeth*.

tible and threadbare garb so ridiculously denominated *republican simplicity*, but invest themselves in decent drapery of brighter hue, and more durable texture. The guise of a cavalier and an authour of the old school, like that of Master Stephen, in the play, should be *melancholy and gentlemanlike*. It is for the *low ambition* of democracy to affect either the language or the deportment of the common people.

As EDMUND BURKE once affirmed with not more pride than truth, that his majesty held his crown in *contempt* of the *choice* of *the revolution society* who have not a *single vote* for a King amongst them *either individually or collectively*. So it should be the *avowed* aim of the high principled and high spirited confederacy, whom we wish to see *banded together*, to publish a Literary Journal in *open defiance* of democracy and fanaticism, and to advance boldly to the support of truth, in perfect contempt of the choice or the dictation of the "*Fond* Many," and their upstart demagogues. In spite of popular clamour, in spite of malignant faction, in spite of all the weeping and wailing of hypocrisy, such a work would FORCE ITS WAY at home, it would be read, and would deserve to be remembered abroad. It would finally triumph over the hostility of every acknowledged, and every latent foe.

Victorque virum volitare per ora.

For The Port Folio.

CRITICISM.

MRS. OPIE'S NEW POEMS.

The Warriour's Return, and other poems by Mrs. Opie. London printed; Philadelphia reprinted for Bradford and Inskeep, by Robert Carr, 1808, 12mo. pp. 191.

Notwithstanding it has always been common to depreciate the character and ridicule the works of literary females, yet in spite of Moliere's comedy or philosophick reasoning, the ladies, whether their education has been contemptuously neglected under the reigns of a Charles or an Anne, or carefully superintended during a more indulgent epoch, have, in either case, dared to write and to publish. In the first instance, we have the Duchess of Newcastle, Mrs. Behn, and Mrs. Centlivre. In the second Mrs. Radcliffe, Mrs. Barbauld, Madame D'Arblay, Charlotte Smith, and Maria Edgeworth, *cum multis aliis*. To this group of feminine authours, the wife of a late Painter of signal celebrity may be added. The name of Amelia Opie has been honoured in the circles of fashion, as well as in the annals of literature, and both her prose and her poetry have had, at home and abroad, a very wide circulation. After the authouress of Belinda, we believe that Mrs. Opie may be named as one of the most successful candidates for publick favour. Her Father and Daughter was very generally perused by that immense mass of misses, who are of opinion, that no higher stimulus for the fancy can be found than in a lamentable story of barbarous seduction. A more rational class of readers derived both pleasure and instruction from those "Simple Tales," which, under a title so unassuming, exhibit much artifice of involution, and great variety of character. A former collection of her poetical compositions was not reviewed without praise, even by the sternest of the Scotch Criticks; and in this new adventure in the regions of fancy, she appears with rather more dignity than one of those distressed damsels of the ancient romance, who, we are assured on the grave authority of Cervantes, used to roam about with knights and squires, through the expanse of plains, or the obscurity of woods, and at length died tranquilly in their beds, as good *virgins as the mothers that bore them.*

Like her poetical predecessour, Charlotte Smith, Mrs. Opie has indulged herself too liberally in the querulous style. She sits down to her writing-desk with a face most wofully pensive. She begins sullen-

ly to moan over some fading hope, or over some blasting disappointment. The Canary bird is either dead, the kitten lame, the parrot hoarse, or her lover away. If the scene of description should transport us to the country, the month of November must be chosen, when the leaves are sufficiently withered, and the winds whistle through the wainscot, in a tone at least as whimpering as a modern sonnet, or as a half-starved puppy in winter weather. Darkness, Death, and long Despair, are most tremendously invoked. Hark from the tombs, is the cry; and rueful Rachel, and doleful Dolly close the funeral procession. If the gloomy system will permit the Muse, thus predetermined to be melancholy, to remain *pensively* at home, without dreaming of a ramble beyond the city gates, then we must begin to think dismally with all our might. We may take occasion, from the watchman's call, or the town-clock, to meditate most mournfully upon the flight of time. The baying of a distant dog, is an exceeding good thing, poetically employed, to depress the spirits; and the bemoaning the condition of a *laborious* linkboy has a marvellous effect in driving a reader to distraction. Whether the Almanack serves us or not, we must have many *glimpses* of the *moon*, to make *night hideous;* and, at all events, the moon must be melancholy, as must also be some hapless nightingale, her mournful minion, not to mention the owl, for fear of giving offence to authours of fine feeling.

All this, to a morbid sensibility, and to eyes that shun the light, may seem very fine. But certainly life has enough of care, without having recourse to far-fetched topicks of grief. Let the last elegy-monger plunder pensiveness from Dr. Young, and with the assistance of many a German labourer, *on Horrour's head horrours accumulate.* But it is much better to exclaim, with the gayety of MILTON, in his happiest mood:

Hence loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes and shrieks, and sights unholy.
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven sings;
There under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.

In justice to Mrs. Opie, the production now before us is of a cast less gloomy than that of many of its predecessours. The lady has judiciously parted with *some* of her ravens. The death-watch only ticks now and then. Crape is not so prodigally worn as heretofore. The mourner is sometimes seen to smile, and the undertaker's men do not deafen us with the dolorous sound of dismal preparation. The first poem in the collection, which is entitled The Warriour's Return, does not, however, prove that Mrs. Opie has wholly relinquished her *customary suit of solemn black.* To our great chagrin, the *inky cloak* is still visible. From the *return* of a warriour, we expected to be delighted with all the hilarity of a Marquis of Huntley from the Netherlands, or the gallant Sir Sidney from the field of Acre. But no: our authouress, with perverse ingenuity, contrives that her man of fight should kill his own son, and the story concludes with all imaginable distress. The measure of this ballad reminded us of Monk Lewis's Alonzo and Imogen. The next is a pretty long rambling narrative upon a very pregnant theme—the old story, a Nun and her propensities. This fruitful subject fills, without any mercy upon our patience, upwards of four-and-twenty pages of poetical description, and reminds us of some of the terrible cases in Heister's Surgery. This *lengthened* narrative is denominated, with awful accuracy *Julia*, or the Convent of St. Clair, and to add to our misery, it is, *horresco referens*, a *Tale founded on fact!* Ever since we read, in our boyhood,

Rousseau's Romance, we have been terribly afraid of these *Julias*, and, like virtuous bachelors, after the strictest rules of continence, we abstain from any intercourse with ladies of so *clear* a complexion. Leaving Julia, therefore, with nearly the same coldness with which *Joseph* left the wife of Potiphar, we pass on exulting in our prudence, to the next article, and this purports to be A Ballad, written to a Provincial Tune, and published by one Mr. *Biggs*. We are exceedingly sorry, that this publishing gentleman, who is thus gratuitously introduced into our company, should choose with so much obstinacy to imitate the example of a clergyman, one of the family, we suppose, who is mentioned in Love laughs at Locksmiths. Notwithstanding poor Kate, the heroine of this ballad, is as defunct

> Yet parson *Biggs* wont *bury* her,
> Although she's *dead* Miss Bailey.

Of this *Mad Wanderer*, whose story is told in the very worst manner of Barbara Allen, we shall say no more than we wish that she was in some Quaker *Bettering* House, or at least restrained from any frantick flights by the straight waistcoat of criticism.

Passing by three or four poems of minor importance, we come, at length, to a poem of some promise, entitled An Ode to Borrowdale in Cumberland. Here we have a glimpse of lyrick glory. The beginning of this ode, the best poem in the collection, is sublime and beautiful:

Hail, Derwent's beauteous pride,
Whose charms rough rocks, in threatening grandeur guard,
Whose entrance seems to mortals barred,
But to the Genius of the storm thrown wide.

He, on thy rocks' dread height,
Reclined beneath his canopy of clouds,
His form in darkness shrouds,
And frowns, as fixt to keep thy beauties from the sight.

But rocks and storms are vain,
'Midst mountains rough and rude,
Man's daring feet intrude,
Till lo! upon the ravished eye
Burst thy clear stream, thy smiling sky,
Thy wooded valley and thy matchless plain.

—But suddenly the smiling day
That cheered the valley, flies away;
The wooded rocks, the rapid stream
No longer boast the noontide beam;
But storms athwart the mountains sail,
And darkly brood o'er Borrowdale;
The frightened swain his cottage seeks,
Ere the thick cloud in terrour speaks.
And see! pale lightning flashes round,
While as the thunder's awful sound
On Echo's pinion widely flies,
Yon cat'ract's roar unheeded dies—
And thee, Sublimity! I hail
Throned on the gloom of Borrowdale.

A few of the epithets in the above stanzas are *familiar to our ears, as household words*, and seem to be a sort of *heirs'-loom*, in the family of poetry, who enjoy by prescription, the right to prattle of a *smiling* sky, a *wooded* valley, and a *matchless* plain. The *ravished* eye of Mrs. Opie will light up a smile on the brow of those audacious sneerers, who remember how much figure allusions of this kind, to the impudence of man, form in the imagination of every woman, who deliberately reads or writes whole volumes stuffed with descriptions of elopements, seducers, violation, &c.

Our sense of harmony is now regaled by the "Song of a Lucayan." On the authority of Dr. Robertson, and Mr. Bryan Edwards, we are first informed, in a prose argument, that the poor Lucayans were a harmless people, cajoled by the perfidy of the Spanish adventurers, who, after decoying them to Hispaniola, left them to despair, or to the unprofitable task of musing upon the beauties of that *natale solum*, whence they had been thus treacherously allured. This simple song of one of the simplest of patriots, exhibits some pleasing proofs of the authour's genius and sensibility. This is followed up by a thing dignified by the name of a song, which is moreover to be sung to a *Russian* air! and, to add to our wonder, "it is soon to be published by the aforesaid Mr. *Biggs!*"

However delightful this *air* may prove to the polar regions; however loudly it may be sung on the banks of the Wolga, or at the court of St. Petersburg, or in the streets of Archangel, we are very confident that but few of our chambermaids would commit its triplet of stanzas to memory. As to the value stamped upon it by the projected publication by Mr. *Biggs*, we leave that to the consideration of those who are curious of *domestick history*.

To our great dejection, the next article is a Ballad, *founded on fact*, and as it begins in lamentation, and terminates in death, we will exclaim, with all the submission of good Catholicks, *requiescat in pace*. In the next song, the lover informs *Marian* that she *is changed since first they met*. This is exceedingly probable, as we are soon informed that this notable female has been not only a mistress and a friend, but a wife and a nurse. The fatiguing duties of this quadruple character, are, we reverently suppose, amply sufficient to give a *pallid* face to the ruddiest of milkmaids.

The subsequent stanzas are more than tolerable:

As o'er the sands the youthful Cynthio strayed,
Moist from the wave, he saw a pebble shine;
While, with its borrowed lustre charmed he said
"Henceforth this sparkling treasure shall be mine."
But when his hand had dried the glistening prize,
Wondering, he found the pebble beam no more!
Then, having viewed it with disdainful eyes,
He, frowning, whirled it to its native shore.

Suppress thy fruitless rage, and on thy heart
Let this, sweet boy, a moral truth impress,
To blunt the power of Disappointment's dart,
And make the dangerous sway of Fancy less.

As o'er the pebble's form the waves had shed,
In silver dews, a soft attractive power,
So Fancy's hand delights, in youth, to spread
Delusive colours on the future hour.

Moist from her pencil tempting scenes arise;
On common life, Romance's tint she lays;
Till cold Reality her hand applies,
And, at the touch, each scattered form decays.

Ingenuous boy, warned by Experience, now,
The pebble's charms shall tempt thine eyes no more;
Would that my verse my Cynthio could bestow
A shield to guard thee against Fancy's power.

Although this composition is oppressed by the heaviness of the *elegiack* measure, and the last line has some resemblance to *a wounded snake*, yet it is as tolerable as any in *Shenstone*.

The 'Origin of the Sail' is fanciful and pretty. A *Sonnet* on the approach of Autumn, we pass over with great indifference, nor is our attention very firmly fixed by verses To Laura, a *Love elegy* to the same, another *love elegy* to a swain by the name of Henry, and two more ditties to this unfortunate shepherd, who must be not a little teazed with this poetical importunity. The Lines on the opening of a Spring Campaign are precisely those tinkling trifles, which Horace describes:

Versus, inopes rerum, nugæque canoræ.

But the next poem, occasioned by the *Place de la Concorde*, at Paris, originally called the *Place de Louis Seize*, next the *Place de la Revolution* where the *perpetual guillotine* stood, is of a very high character. Here there is much to praise, both in the sentiment and the expression. This noble composition we will not mutilate.

Proud Seine, along thy winding tide,
Fair smiles yon plain, expanding wide,
And, decked with Art and Nature's pride,
Seems formed for jocund revelry.

Scene, formed the eye of taste to please!
There splendid domes attention seize,

There, proudly towering, spreading trees
Arise in beauteous rivalry.

But there's a place amidst that plain,
Which bids its beauties beam in vain;
Which wakes the inmost soul to pain,
And prompts the throb of agony.

That place by day, lo! numbers fly,
And, shuddering, start to see it nigh;
Who there at midnight breathe the sigh
OF FAITHFUL, SUFFERING LOYALTY.

While, blending with those loyal sighs,
Ofttimes the patriot's murmurs rise,
Who thither, hid by Darkness, flies
To mourn the sons of Liberty.

Lo! as amid that plain I stray,
Methinks strange sadness shrouds the day,
And clothed in Slaughter's red array
Appears the scene of gayety.

For once that spot was dark with blood,
There Death's destroying engine stood,
There streamed, alas! the vital flood
Of all that graced humanity.

Ah! since this fair domain ye chose,
Dread ruffians, for your murderous blows,
Could not the smiling scene unclose
Your hearts to love and charity.

No—horrid contrast! on that scene
The murderer reared his poniard keen;
There proudly stalked, with hideous mien,
The blood-stained sons of Anarchy.

Nor, Gallia, shall thy varied mirth,
Thy store of all that graces earth,
Ere give a kind Oblivion-birth
To thy RECORDED CRUELTY.

In all thy pomp of charms and power,
Earth can, alas! forget no more
The awful guilt that stains thy shore,
With dyes of sanguine tyranny

Than they, who see blue lightnings beam,
Can e'er forget, though fair they seem,
That Danger lurks in every gleam,
And Death's appalling agency.

The verses To Lothario, are exceedingly spirited, and will please and edify every well-principled matron. The habitual coldness towards this libertine lover, who is evidently a prototype of that *dear perfidious*, that *gay deceiver*, in Rowe's Tragedy, is what wedded Love must loudly approve.

Think not, Lothario, while I view
The bright expression of thy face,
And on thy cheek of crimson hue
Emotions varying beauties trace,
That in my heart one feeling dwells,
But what the coldest must approve,
Nor think my conscious bosom swells,
With aught resembling secret love.

No—still these eyes can fix on thine,
Nor fear their keenest glance to meet;
And when thou boldly, searchest mine
My quiet heart disdains to beat.

But, if by vain self-love misled,
Thou in my looks canst passion see;
And think, by weak illusions fed,
My towering hopes aspire to thee,

Let us my absent Henry seek;
And when he meets my conscious eyes,
In every glance my heart will speak,
And plainly tell for whom it sighs.

This is something better than poetry. It exhibits the loyalty of Imogen and the dignity of virtue.

Again we come up with Henry, who, though he seems a little shy is very closely pursued by his fair friend, one Miss *Emma*, who tells him, probably to his sorrow, that she'll *never leave him*. After this tremendous threat, she vows, that she could dwell with him *in a desert;* nay, share with him in the labours of wood-cutting, and other cares, incident to the sylvan life. She hints, moreover, at the comforts of a *hovel*, and talks with so much pastoral silliness about her *everlasting* constancy, that the very idea of retirement, and shepherdesses, and cottages and forests, begins to grow nauseous, nor can our qualmishness be relieved till we jocundly exclaim, with honest *Walter* in the Opera:

We will holla now, for *joy*,
We are *out of the wood*, sirs.

After amusing herself with verses "To Anna, and "To Remembance" and "To *Secret* Love," and "To a Maniack," all of which are of so insipid a character, that we wonder how the compositor kept himself awake while setting his types, our lady authouress grows more than commonly serious, and composes a poem more prolix than poetical, with the terrifick title of "Lines on the hearing *three or four years ago*, that *Constantinople* was *swallowed up by an earthquake; a report though false, at that time very generally believed!*"

This mischievously circumstantial annunciation of a *Non Entity*, absolutely produced some of the most alarming symptoms of profound sleepiness, which soon exhibited the character of full-formed lethargy, when we discovered that the poem was written in *blank verse*. At the close, two little songs "To *Henry*," *again*, only roused us so far as to ask with Falstaff, "I prithee, tell me *Hal*, what's o'clock;" nor, were we broad awake, until Mr. *Biggs* came thundering to the door with "A song," which, as usual, *he had published*, and which was written to a *Hindoo air*. The noise Mr. *Biggs* made, together with our peals of laughter at him, and his Indostan musick, soon drove all the leaden Powers of Drowsiness away, and we were enabled, with a very laudable degree of vigilance and cheerfulness, to read the following verses, which have nothing *anodyne* in their composition:

Low hung the dark clouds on Plinlimmon's tall peak,
And slowly, yet surely, the winter drew near;
When Ellen, sweet Ellen, a tear on her cheek,
Exclaimed, as we parted, 'In May I'll be here.'

How swiftly I ran up the mountain's steep height,
To catch the last glimpse of an object so dear!
And when I no longer could keep her in sight,
I thought on her promise 'In May I'll be here.'

Now gladly I mark from Plinlimmon's tall peak
The low-hanging vapours and clouds disappear;
And climb the rough mountain, thence Ellen to seek,
Repeating her promise 'In May I'll be here.'

But vainly I gaze the wide prospect around,
'Tis May, yet no Ellen returning is near;
Oh! when shall I see her, when *feel my heart bound*,
As sweetly she cries '*It is May, and I'm here.*'

(To be continued.)

For The Port Folio

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

Messrs. BRADFORD and INSKEEP, booksellers of this city, who are always prompt to obtain and publish the most recent publications of a meritorious character, which are printed abroad, have just published The Warriour's Return, and other poems by the celebrated Mrs. OPIE. This poetical miscellany is very neatly printed on woven paper by Carr. We predict without much hazard of disappointment that this little volume will be a great favourite with the ladies, and a parlour window book for those sighing swains, in whose estimation nothing in poetry is comparable to the serious and the sentimental. The verses of this amiable woman are remarkable for a certain plaintive cast. Her Muse is often in tears. The general invocation used by Mrs. Opie is in the very spirit of MILTON,

Hail, thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest *Melancholy*.

The following poem is of a more cheerful character than most of its associates. It will probably be repeated, and not without enthusiasm by many a lover.

THE ORIGIN OF THE SAIL.

Sweet maid on whom my wishes rest,
My morning thought, my midnight dream,
O grant Lysander's fond request,
And let those eyes with mercy beam!

Thy cold delays at length give o'er,
And let me claim thy nuptial vow!
Bid that cold bosom, cold no more,
With mutual passion's ardour glow.

To yonder isle amidst the sea,
Which sportive laves those mountain's feet,
Beloved Euphrasia haste with me,
And there the priest of Hymen meet.

There spicy groves thick foliage spread
The timid virgin's blush to hide;
There, gales, which tender languors shed
Diffuse the richest perfumes wide.

"O blest retreat for happy love,
And see the sun's descending beams,
Now richly gild each distant grove
And shed around soft roseate gleams.

" Then let this bark for thee design'd,
For thee by anxious fondness drest,
Yon beauteous island strive to find,
And bear us o'er the ocean's breast."

Here paused the youth, and round her waist
His arm with timid boldness threw;
While from his grasp, with blushing haste,
The pleased yet frowning fair withdrew.

" And wilt thou scorn my suit," he said,
While in despair his hands he wrung—
" Behold!" replied the yielding maid,
And to the bark she, sighing, sprung.

There fondly seated by her side,
The youth her fluttered spirits cheer'd,
And o'er the eve-empurpled tide,
To find the priest of Hymen steer'd.

But too, too slow for lovers' haste
The sluggish bark appeared to move;
Still lengthening seemed the watery waste
To thy fond glances, eager Love!

At length with fruitless wishes tired,
The fretful youth to Cupid prayed;
Who, pitying power! a thought inspired
The ardent suppliant's will to aid.

To hide her face from love's keen gaze,
O'er which consent's soft languor spread,
Within her veil's luxuriant maze,
Euphrasia wrapt her beauteous head.

But now that veil the youth unbinds,
Then to the bark with ardour ties;
See! its folds catch the passing winds,
And lo, to land the vessel flies.

But not alone, youth loved of Heaven,
Thy glowing bosom blest that hour;
The thought, to crown thy wishes given,
Still charms with never-ending power:

And grateful ages yet unborn,
Shall bless Euphrasia's floating veil;
Thence dawned on art a brighter morn,
For thence she framed the swelling sail.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

In one of the village newspapers, in some of which we sometimes discover proofs of genius and sparkles of wit, we lately perused the following, which we hope from some of our friends will excite more than a smile.

TECHNICAL DUN.

The following letter was sent to a *watchmaker* in this county, by the printer, in consequence of which the *balance* between them was accurately *regulated*.

SIR,

It having become necessary to *wind up* a large number of out-standing accounts to prevent my *running down* in business, by *advancing* the small sum you owe me without *loss of time* you will assist in *keeping me in motion*.

Yours, &c.

We regret that Z. should have cause to write in a mood so gloomy. Let him abandon his courtship of the populace and run the glorious race of permanent reputation. How often must we press upon his recollection the energetick lines of one of the most nervous of our poets:

The dismal tales, that poets tell
Are verified on earth, and not in hell;
No Tantalus looks with a fearful eye,
Or dreads the impending rock to crush
him from on high,
No Tityus, torn by vultures, lies in hell,
Nor could the lobes of his rank liver
swell
To that prodigious mass for their eternal
meal.
But *he's* the Tityus, who by *Love opprest*,
Or *tyrant passion* preying on his breast,
And *ever enxious thoughts, is robb'd of rest.*
The Sisyphus is he, whom noise and
strife
Seduce from all the soft retreats of life,
To vex the government, disturb the
laws;
Drunk with the fumes of popular applause.
He courts the *giddy crowd* to make him
great,
And toils in vain to mount the sovereign
seat.
For *still to aim at power, and still to fail,*
Ever to strive, and never to prevail,
What is it, but, in reason's true account
To *heave the stone against the rising mount.*

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